

them that "If we are to have anything like the success of the early Philosophic Radicals, we must be able, like them, to 'explain in the laige dialect of a definite scheme what are our aims and whither we are going' " Planned action, the planned approach, the coherent programme—this is, from first to last, the essence not of their doctrine only but of their practice. He proved it, as a member of the London County Council. It was the master idea in the Campaign for the Prevention of Destitution of 1909 to 1911. It is the key idea in *Labour and the New Social Order*, as in *Labour and The Nation*. In either case it was Webb who fitted that key into the lock. In season and out of season, through good report and ill, they stood for planning, in days when that word was not in common use.

By 1931, and indeed for some years earlier, Russia had come to stand to the world not only as one of the two great experiments in dictatorship, but rather as, primarily, *the* great experiment in practical planning. So much was this the case that, by 1931, many had forgotten dictatorship in their interest in and sympathy for planning. The Webbs were not likely to forget dictatorship, but were there in the world two persons likely to feel so keen an interest in, or so comprehensive a sympathy for, the Five Years Plan?

They read, therefore, they studied, they prepared themselves, before, in the latter end of May 1932, they took the final step of going to look. Their standard of preparation is immensely high. In the autumn of 1932, they

published a
small volume which they call *Methods of Social
Study*. If there
be anything of accident in the appearance of
this volume, at
the moment at which it did appear, the
accident is a very
happy one for the reader. Nothing could put
him in a better
position to appreciate the attitude they
attempted to take
with them to Russia than this guide on How to
look. After
a most illuminating disquisition, in the first
chapter, on *The*